

served as president of the Florida Association of Colleges and Universities and chairman of the Independent Colleges and Universities. As a testament to her dedication to education, four Florida universities: Holy Cross College, University of Miami, Rollins College, and Lynn University, have conferred honorary degrees on Sister Jeanne, making her one of the most respected and loved educators in Florida's history.

Sister Jeanne has also been an advocate of revitalizing South Florida's economy. South Florida's power elite noticed her qualities and dedication and named Sister the first female member of two exclusive groups: The Orange Bowl Committee and the Non-Group. The Orange Bowl Committee is a group of dedicated, South Florida volunteers, who are committed to bringing tourism to South Florida through the annual college football game. Now, one of the four most prestigious college football bowl games in America, the Orange Bowl festivities bring in an excess of 150,000 visitors every year, which contribute to a thriving South Florida economy.

Despite all her dedication and hard work, even Sister Jeanne is susceptible to illness and in 1996, Sister was diagnosed with lung cancer. However, even this disease could not stop her determination. Following disclosing publicly her illness, Sister helped raise awareness and funds for the American Cancer Society.

Mr. Speaker, as a fellow lung cancer survivor, I know how difficult life seems after being diagnosed with such a terrible illness. For Sister Jeanne to continue her work like this is an inspiration to every cancer patient and survivor in America. I am also grateful to Sister for her thoughts and prayers during my illness earlier this year.

Sister Jeanne is a dear friend, and someone I am truly proud to know and love. Sister Jeanne's vision continues. Her love for Barry and South Florida is evident evermore. Under Sister Jeanne's supervision, Barry University is attempting the largest construction project in Miami Shores history. Nearly \$18 million will bring a new student center and residence hall to accommodate the growing student population, which Sister Jeanne has pushed to grow and expand ever since she took office.

Mr. Speaker, as Chairman of Florida's Congressional Delegation, I salute Sister Jeanne O'Laughlin for her 22 years as President of Barry University. May God bless Sister Jeanne O'Laughlin.

H.R. 2297, VETERANS BENEFITS ACT OF 2003

SPEECH OF

HON. TOM UDALL

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 20, 2003

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2297, the Veterans Benefits Act of 2003, contains myriad benefits for our nation's veterans, many of which are long overdue. The bill builds on education benefits by expanding the Montgomery GI Bill program, a successful program that will now include educational assistance for on the job training in certain self-employment programs. It also increases monthly educational benefits for spouses and

dependent children of veterans with permanent total disabilities, or who have died as a result of combat.

Among the housing benefits in the bill is a provision allowing remarried surviving spouses of veterans to be buried next to the veteran in a national cemetery, based on the original marriage. A prohibition on remarried spouses burial eligibility is unfair to many of the dedicated spouses who have faithfully supported their veterans for years. I was a cosponsor of the original bill for this measure and support its passage.

The section of the bill relating to benefits for former Prisoners of War contains a provision that will add cirrhosis of the liver to the list of presumed service-connected disabilities for former POWs. It also eliminates the unfair requirement that a POW must be held for at least 30 days to qualify for presumption of service-connection for certain disabilities, such as psychoses and states of anxiety. We owe it to our former POWs to repay them for what they have been through as much as we possibly can, and this provision is a step in that direction.

Yet another beneficial provision in this bill is the extension for six years of the Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans. As a representative in a state with over 9,000 Native American veterans, and with over 17,200 Hispanic veterans in my district alone, I fully support this provision and believe it is a necessary step to the continued service to all minority veterans.

Another provision in the bill provides federal contracting officials the discretionary authority to award sole source contracts to small businesses owned by service-disabled veterans. I am pleased that the Senate took out the "notwithstanding any other provision of law" phrase that was in the original version of H.R. 1460, from which the language for this provision of H.R. 2297 was taken. The language included in the original version of H.R. 1460 was very harmful to the 8(a) small business contract program, a program that benefits minority-owned small businesses all across this country. As a member of both the House Veterans' Affairs Committee and House Small Business Committee I worked to forge a suitable compromise that would ensure increased contracting opportunities for veteran-owned small businesses, while not harming the 8(a) program that has helped provide economic opportunity for minority entrepreneurs. With the help of the Chairmen and Ranking Members of both committees, we were able to unanimously pass an amended version of H.R. 1460.

Unfortunately the unanimously passed version of H.R. 1460 is not what is included in H.R. 2297 today, but neither is the originally damaging language of H.R. 1460 included in this bill. I do have remaining concerns about the effect of the included contracting provision on the 8(a) and other small business programs, but considering the numerous important provisions for our nation's veterans contained in this bill, I will vote in favor.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, let me say that I strongly support increased opportunities for veteran entrepreneurs. In fact, with the support of Congresswoman SUE KELLY, I recently introduced H.R. 3483, the Seeds for Soldiers Act, to establish a loan program and a vocational rehabilitation program for veterans. As a member of the House Veterans' Affairs Com-

mittee, I strongly support strengthening benefits for our Nation's veterans, who have fought so bravely to protect our country. I support the passage of H.R. 2297 and look forward to continuing work in the House Veterans' Affairs Committee to support our Nation's heroes.

LET'S GO LANCERS

HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 21, 2003

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, while the Boston Red Sox failed to finally capture a World Series victory that has eluded them since 1918, another group of Hardball Heroes from Red Sox Nation did achieve their ultimate goal. The Malden Catholic Lancers defied all expectations, overcame every obstacle, and defeated every opponent to finish the year as Massachusetts Division One State Champions.

While Red Sox fans will have to wait until next year yet again, the Lancers fans can rejoice and celebrate the success of this young team of schoolyard superstars.

Mr. Speaker, today I join with faculty, students, my fellow alumni, and all members of the Malden Catholic community who are saying congratulations!

It was Coach Stephen Freker's guidance and leadership that fueled these young men as they drove to the championship. The National High School Baseball Coach's Association affirmed what we knew all along by naming Coach Freker New England's Coach of the Year.

These Lancers worked hard, practiced long, and gave their hearts and souls for the blue and gold all year long. While they are great individual players, their true greatness lies in their ability to play as team.

Mr. Speaker, this was our year.

Let's Go Lancers!

IN RECOGNITION OF THE GLENDALE GENERAL RICHARD GRIDLEY CHAPTER OF THE DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 21, 2003

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the General Gridley Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution on their 90th anniversary celebration.

Mrs. Mary Howard Gridley Braly founded the chapter on December 19, 1913. Mrs. Braly served as an organizing regent, and was later named Regent-For-Life by Chapter members. Mrs. Braly and her daughter first became members of the National Society of D.A.R. in 1983 in Highland Park, Illinois. Then recording Secretary General Miss Eugenia Washington, one of the D.A.R. founders, signed their applications.

The chapter is named for General Richard Gridley, ancestor of Mary's first husband James Conger Gridley. General Gridley was born in Boston in 1711. In 1745 he was commissioned Lieutenant Colonel of the Artillery in

the expedition against the French fortress of Louisbourg of Cape Breton Island. At the outbreak of the Revolutionary War in April 1775, he was commissioned chief engineer and Colonel of Artillery and was wounded in the battle of Bunker Hill. He married Hannah Deming and had nine children. He served with General George Washington throughout the Revolutionary War. In 1798 General Gridley died in Staughton, Massachusetts at the age of 87.

Today the chapter is extremely involved in the community. It is active in veterans' services, ROTC programs, and scholarship programs with our local high schools. The chapter also presented the City of Glendale with the Department of Defense's 50th Anniversary of the Korean War flag. This flag currently flies over the Glendale War Memorial at City Hall.

I ask all Members of Congress to join me today in congratulating the General Gridley Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution on 90 exemplary years of service to the City of Glendale and surrounding communities.

A HERO LEAVES BEHIND A LAST- ING LEGACY—GOD'S LOVE: RE- MARKS ON BEHALF OF ROBERT HODGES

HON. WALTER B. JONES

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 21, 2003

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, last Monday was a sad day for Eastern North Carolinians and America as a whole. On November 10, 2003, North Carolina lost her oldest living Veteran, Robert Hodges. When Mr. Hodges passed away, he was 115.

I had the privilege of meeting Mr. Hodges at an event in his hometown just a few years ago. Even in the brief interaction I shared with this living legend, I was struck by his sharp mind and vitality. I can still remember Mr. Hodges singing "Over There" so beautifully . . . he was so lucid, his voice so clear, you would never have believed he was celebrating his 114th birthday.

Born June 18, 1888, Mr. Hodges was not only North Carolina's oldest living veteran, he was one of America's longest living war heroes as well.

Mr. Hodges had a phenomenal story. He was born in North Carolina's first official town, Bath. The grandson of slaves, Mr. Hodges shared a three-room house with his parents and 9 siblings.

He worked the fields in rural Eastern North Carolina until 1918. At the age of 20, Mr. Hodges enlisted in the Army and went on to serve in France during World War I.

After World War I, Hodges returned to North Carolina and married Malinda. The couple enjoyed 70 years together until her death at the age of 92.

Mr. Hodges and his wife raised 7 children on their farm in Pamlico County, where Mr. Hodges worked until his poor eyesight forced him into retirement. The Hodges family still calls the Pamlico area home, with his surviving children living in Stonewall and New Bern.

He was honored in 2002 with North Carolina's Order of the Longleaf Pine, the state's highest civilian order.

While Mr. Hodges most certainly leaves behind an amazing personal and military history, I must say that in my opinion, the most significant legacy this hero left behind is a pure and stalwart love of Jesus Christ. Last year Mr. Hodges was quoted as saying, "What I figure on is anything you can do for the Lord is all right."

Despite all his honors and all the attention he had showered on him through the years, Mr. Hodges always kept his heart in check. He knew that in the end, he would take nothing with him when he left this world.

More important than all the military medals and awards was the love of Jesus.

I believe wholeheartedly that the secret of Mr. Hodges long life was love of family and love of the Lord.

That is why I'm confident that when Mr. Hodges closed his eyes to this world, he opened them in Heaven. And that, Mr. Speaker, is a reward well earned by Mr. Hodges' life lived by faith. From battlefield to his front porch, Mr. Hodges did it all for the glory of the Lord.

I stand today in remembrance of this military hero and godly man. May God bless his soul, and the family he left behind.

SIERRA NATIONAL FOREST LAND EXCHANGE ACT OF 2003

SPEECH OF

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 18, 2003

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased the House is considering H.R. 1651—The Sierra National Forest Land Exchange Act of 2003 on suspension today. I thank my colleagues, Mr. NUNES and Mr. DOOLEY, in addition to Resources Committee Chairman POMBO, for their support and assistance on this measure.

H.R. 1651 completes a land exchange between the Forest Service and a constituent of mine, Mr. Bob Glassman. Under the exchange, the Forest Service will obtain an 80 acre parcel within the Sierra National Forest from my constituent, who will in turn receive a 160 acre parcel located on Shaver Lake and also within the Sierra National Forest.

Upon completion of the land exchange with the Forest Service, my bill states that my constituent will convey the newly acquired 160 parcel on Shaver Lake to the Sequoia Council of the Boy Scouts. The Boy Scouts have operated a recreational camp on a portion of this land for over five decades. Thousands of Scouts use the camp each year to experience outdoor activities and gain leadership skills. Owning the property will allow the Sequoia Council of the Boy Scouts to make improvements to the facilities located on the land. This bill, therefore, allows the Scouts to provide continued opportunities for young men to learn the importance of and actively participate in serving their community.

Given that there is a hydroelectric facility at Shaver Lake, I have worked with the operator of that facility, Southern California Edison, to ensure it can maintain and operate its hydro project once the land exchange is completed. As a strong supporter of hydroelectric power, I am pleased to say that under my legisla-

tion—this hydro facility can continue to operate unencumbered.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1651 is a non-controversial piece of legislation that will benefit the lives of Boy Scouts for years to come. As such, I encourage my colleagues to support its passage.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2754, ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOP- MENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT 2004

SPEECH OF

HON. MAURICE D. HINCHEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 18, 2003

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the Chairman of the Energy and Water Subcommittee, Mr. Hobson and the ranking member, Mr. Visclosky for their good work on this bill. This conference report deserves the overwhelming support it is about to receive.

I do want to bring attention to one provision in this bill that has not received the scrutiny it deserves. Section 115 is an affront to our nation's environmental laws. It was not included in either the House or Senate bills and was added in conference. The provision waives all environmental laws and directs the construction of a road from the village of King Cove, Alaska through the sensitive Izembek National Wildlife Refuge and right to the boundary of the fragile and internationally significant Izembek Wilderness Area.

Specifically, Section 115 directs the Corps of Engineers to build a road proposed in one Alternative from a draft Environmental Impact Statement prepared to evaluate several modes of transportation between the villages of King Cove and Cold Bay, Alaska. The Environmental Protection Agency has raised significant concerns with the alternative mandated by Section 115. The Corps of Engineers is still reviewing public comment on the draft EIS.

The King Cove Access Project first surfaced as legislation in 1998. Proponents attempted to add the provision to an appropriations bill that year but were not successful. A compromise was reached later that year with the King Cove Health and Safety Act which was included as Section 353 of Public Law 105-277, the Department of Transportation and Related Agencies Appropriations Act. The measure appropriated \$40 million to address the access needs of the communities of King Cove and Cold Bay; however, the Act did not approve a road through the Izembek refuge or the Izembek Wilderness. In fact, the legislation specifically required that expenditure of the funds allocated in the bill "must be in accordance with all other applicable laws."

Five years after a satisfactory compromise was agreed upon, this rider inappropriately short-circuits the public process. An administrative decision on a project to enhance marine-road access for the community of King Cove is proceeding in a timely manner and does not require intervention by Congress. However, the King Cove Access Project mandates one alternative in the EIS, thereby effectively ignoring the advice of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, other federal agencies and the American public.

Section 115 is an affront not only to public process, but also to our nation's environmental